Committee on strategy regarding F. C. V. Tobacco

2364. DR. YELAMANCHILI SIVAJI: Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that a high powered committee was appointed on the Long Term strategy of F.C.V. Tobacco;

(b) if so, who are the members on the committee;

(c) whether they have submitted the report;

(d) what are the details of their recommendations; and

(e) what steps have been taken by Government to implement these recommendations?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION WITH ADDITIONAL CHARGE OF THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE (SHRI KAMALUDDIN AHMED): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The composition of the Committee was as under:—

(1) Shri Ashok Kumar (Chairman)
Joint Secretary, EP (Agri.)
Ministry of COMMERCE,
NEW DELHI.

(2) Shri P.P. Williams, (Convenor)
Chairman, Tobacco Board,
GUNTUR.

(3) Shri B. V. Sivaiah
Narakodur, Guntur Distt.

(4) Shri P.S.H. Prasada Rao,
President, I.T.A.,
GUNTUR.

(5) Shri G. K. P. Reddy,
ITC Ltd., GUNTUR.

(6) Shri Natwar Singh Solanki, MP
Chairman, National Cooperative
Tobacco Growers' Federation
Ltd., ANAND.

(7) Shri A. Rashid,
Chairman,
All India Hookah Tobacco
Exporters Association,
MORADABAD.

(8) Shri S. Kori,
Director,
Directorate of Tobacco
Development,
MADRAS.

(9) Shri S. K. Srivastava,
Deputy Secretary,
Ministry of Industry,
Deptt. of Industrial
Development,
NEW DELHI.

(10) Director of Agriculture,
Government of Karnataka.

(11) Commissioner and Director of
Agriculture,
Govt. of Andhra Pradesh.

(12) Representative of Ministry of
Agriculture.

(13) Dr. M. S. Chari,
Director
CTRI. Co-opted Member.

(14) Abdul Khader,
Sopariwala Exports,
Bombay. Co-opted Member.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) and (e). The salient recommendations of the Committee and the action taken thereon are given below :

Recommendation	Action Taken
1. As long as there is an export demand India should continue to produce tobacco.	India is continuing to produce tobacco.
2. To bring about stability in production, the Board should effectively direct its annual exercise of production planning.	Being done.
3. It is necessary to empower the Board to seize and confiscate unauthorised stocks and to prosecute law breakers.	The Board approved certain amendments to the Tobacco Board Act in the meeting held on 28-1-93 to empower the Board along these lines.
4. Tobacco cultivation in light soils should be encouraged.	Tobacco Board is gradually increasing the crop size in light soil areas.
5. There is need for elimination of saline and low lying lands from tobacco.	Production of tobacco in saline and low lying soils is being discouraged.
6. To ensure planting is done as per licences, there should be crop inspection by Board staff.	Despite publicity and inspection by the Board Staff, a large number of farmers have a tendency to grow crop in excess of authorisation or without authorisation.
7. Tobacco varieties resistant to pests and diseases should be evolved.	CTRI has evolved leaf mosaic resistant varieties. Research is being continued to evolve more pest and disease resistant varieties.
8. There is need for improvement in curing process to reduce cost.	Roof insulation of barn to conserve energy is one of the techniques evolved recently, which is being evaluated by the Indian Institute of Sciences, Bangalore.
9. Tobacco Board field staff should play an important role in extension activities.	Board has intensified its extension activity through field staff, and group meetings of farmers, staff and scientists are being held frequently to have better interaction.
10. Inadequacies in the auction system should be rectified.	Auction floor level committees have been constituted to remove irritants regrding classification of tobacco. Standard samples are prepared and displayed for reference purpose to avoid disputes.
11. There is need for maintaining stability in price.	Trade Wing of the Tobacco Board has margin money capital to make purchases as and when prices fall below the Minimum Support Prices (MSP). Traders are advised to maintain price stability.
12. There is need for restricting the number of buyers on the auction floor.	This is reviewed every year.
13. There is need for efforts to improve exports.	Action Taken to improve exports includes sponsoring of trade delegations, participation in Fairs and exhibitions, publicity in international magazines, and through coloured brochures etc.
14. There is need for giving long term credit to certain hopeful markets for tobacco.	Long term credit (18 months credit) was extended for Algerian import of Indian tobacco. Special payment terms have been allowed for export to Egypt, Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco.
15. Counter trade should be used as a means for boosting exports.	Tobacco is included as an item permiseable for export on counter trade basis.